

HAMPTON VA

NEWS RELEASE

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Opportunities for budget input

April 30, 2013 -- Hampton residents have additional opportunities to give input on the proposed city budget for next year, fiscal 2014.

The city manager's proposed budget would raise the real estate tax rate between 13 cents and 23 cents. During a six-week public input process, residents overwhelmingly rejected most of the proposed cuts to city and school services and expressed support for a tax rate increase.

City Council has a special meeting and public hearing on the budget Wednesday, May 1, at 7 p.m. A work session is scheduled earlier that day, at 1 p.m. Council is scheduled to vote on the FY14 budget at its meeting Wednesday, May 8, at 7 p.m. That meeting is not a public hearing, but residents can address any topic at the 6 p.m. public comment session.

Hampton City Council has a "tax equalization" policy in place that recommends a formula for lowering the tax rate when assessments increase. Since 2004, the rate has been lowered five times, from \$1.27 per \$100 of assessed value to \$1.04. Hampton Finance Committee member Jesse Hughes told City Council at an April 24 budget work session that if Council had a similar policy in place to raise the rate during years when assessments declined, the formula would suggest an adjusted rate for 2014 of \$1.27.

Eighty-eight percent of the 2,400 residents who voluntarily gave input at in-person meetings and via a web survey said they were willing to raise the tax rate. An independent, random telephone survey by Continental Research found 82 percent of residents favored increasing taxes to protect services or invest in technology, renovation and construction.

All upcoming meetings take place in Council Chambers, 8th floor of City Hall, 22 Lincoln St. They will be televised on PEG-TV (Channel 47 on Cox and 23 on Fios) and streamed on the web. Look for the link at hampton.gov/council. To view the proposed budget-in-brief, manager's message or full budget, go to hampton.gov/budget.

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